

**DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2015
ROOM 400
TOWN HALL, WEST HARTFORD, CT**

CALL TO ORDER: 4:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE:

DRAC: Sheldon Crosby, Vice-Chair; Members: Gordon Binkhorst, Fred Fritz; and Alternate: Kimberly Parsons-Whitaker

Staff: Todd Dumais, Town Planner; Catherine Dorau, Associate Planner

STUDY SESSION:

1. **27 Park Road** - Study session preparatory to the Town Council's receipt of a Special Development District application for the redevelopment of the Sisters of Saint Joseph site located at 27 Park Road. (Initial DRAC Study Session on February 4, 2015. Additional study sessions on February 25, 2015, March 18, 2015 and April 9, 2015.)

The Town Planner, Todd Dumais mentioned that this meeting is still a 'study session' as were the prior four sessions. He noted that an application has been submitted to the Town Council for a Zone Change and overlay Special Development District but that tonight's meeting is still a preliminary study session because the Town Council has not formally received and referred the application to DRAC. It is anticipated that the Town Council will refer the application to DRAC at its October 27, 2015 meeting.

Earlier study sessions focused on the overall site and building. This meeting was primarily to focus on the building.

Northeast Collaborative Architects presented a simulated street-view video of the building and site traveling west to east along Park Road and Prospect Street, and different angles around the building. The materials and colors were discussed. It was noted by the applicant's architect that the south side of the building originally had shown more brick but that due to budget restraints, it was difficult to include the brick other than on the southeast and southwest corners of the building. An additional change to the south elevation was the French doors formerly shown on the south side were now shown as high sliding glass doors. DRAC expressed a concern about the building's northeast corner lacking sufficient detail and reading too flat. It was suggested that architectural details similar to the classical details of the existing building (lentils, stills, pilasters, quoins and corbels) be explored but not necessarily replicated or copied. Mr. Crosby suggested adding lentils and stills to the windows and exploring use of different brick patterns such as soldier course to achieve the detail needed. Overall, DRAC spoke

regarding the massing and materials for the northeast corner and complimented the architect on achieving a more appropriate scale for this important corner.

DRAC expressed significant concern about the southern elevation. Mr. Crosby noted that material of the upper levels, in particular, the lapboard hardiplank, was too residential of a look for a building of this scale. There was extensive discussion regarding the vast length of the south elevation and the building and the need to create more distinct elements to break up the visual length and mass. Alternatives were discussed such as recessing the interior corridor room areas, changes to the cornice line, breaking of the garage “cornice,” by carrying the residential building elements down, alternating material types. Mr. Dumais suggested, and DRAC supported, looking at revising the parking and landscaping on the south side and creating more landscape islands closer to the building to help soften the expanse of the garage. The applicant stated that they would look at the feasibility of some of the suggested changes and come back to DRAC.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

- September 16, 2015 – **Tabled to the next meeting.**
- October 7, 2015 – **Approved 4-0. Motion: Binkhorst / Second: Crosby.**

ADJOURNMENT: 5:45 P.M.

C: Ron Van Winkle, Town Manager
Patrick Alair, Deputy Corporation Counsel

Mark McGovern, Director of Community Services
Essie Labrot, Town Clerk

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